

A
LETTER

TO

Dr. BURNET,

Occasioned by his late LETTER
to Mr. LOWTH.

SIR,

WHEN I read your Letter to Mr. Lowth, which you lately sent abroad to find him out (as you are pleased to express your self, as if Mr. Lowth were some Out-law'd, or Silent, or (at least) very Obscure Person) I could not but conclude either that Mr. Lowth was a most weak man for charging you with Fraudulent Dealing without turning to your Book, or that Dr. Burnet was a most confident man for denying matter of Fact in a Point that was so easie to be examined; especial-

A

ly

ly since you are so *positive* in justifying your *Self*, and so severe in dealing with *Him*, as if he were one of the most *Unjust*, and *Ignorant*, and *Contemptible* men of all the Clergy. Upon this I resolved to use mine *Own* eyes, because you say the Truth on your side is so *obvious* and *clear*; partly that I might find out Mr. *Lowth's* mistake (if there was one) and partly that I might vindicate the Credit of your Book, which (you say) would be *shaken*, if he had accused you *justly*: for to be free with you, some people believe it to be the *only good* thing you ever wrote, that could recommend you to the kind opinion of *Honest Men*, that know the difference between *English* and *Scotch*.

I perceive the thing in Controversie between Mr. *Lowth* and your self lieth thus. First, Mr. *Lowth* tells us from Dr. *Durel*, that Arch-Bishop *Cranmer* changed his former opinion about *Church-Power*, subscribing to the Opinion of Dr. *Leygton*; and that when Dr. *Durel* perused Dr. *Stillingfleet's* Manuscript, he saw *Th. Cantuariensis* set with the Arch-Bishops own hand below Dr. *Leygton's* name, to shew his *Approbation* of *Leygton's* Judgment, and his own love of *Truth*: and that this was upon the Article of *Church-Power* (for *that's* the bottom of the present Controversie.) Secondly, Mr. *Lowth* tells you upon his own observation, that you, Dr. *Burnet*, have dealt *unfaithfully* in Transcribing that part of the Manuscript,

script, in not giving any account to the World of the Arch Bishops subscription to Dr. *Leighton* in that Point, but omitting it wholly, and even in the Second Edition of your Book, which you say is *Corrected* too. This is Mr. *Lowth's* story, and indeed if he be in the *right*, your dealing with the House of Commons, and with the Lords too, and with the whole world is very *Disingenuous* and *Foul*. On the other hand ~~now~~, First, you Dr. *Burnet*, do grant in your *History* (lib. 3. pag. 289. as your Adversary doth rightly object) that in *Cranmer's* Paper some *Singular* Opinions of his about the nature of *Ecclesiastical Offices* are found; but as they are delivered by him with all possible *Modesty*, so they were not establish'd as the Doctrin of the *Church*, but laid *aside* as particular conceits of his *own*, and it seems that afterwards he *changed* his Opinion. Secondly, you confess in your *Letter*, that Dr. *Durel*, the Dean of *Windfor* may be *Believed* (pag. 5.) so that upon the whole you own what Mr. *Lowth* saith as to that part of the Story, that *Cranmer* did really subscribe to *Leighton* upon the Point of *Church-Power*, and that this Subscription is in the Manuscript which Dr. *Durel* and your self both *saw*. Now the question between Mr. *Lowth* and you is, about your *Faithfulness* or *Unfaithfulness* in the *Transcribing*. Mr. *Lowth* saith, you have *not* noted *Cranmer's* Subscription in that Point; you say that you

have, and that in your Book (*pag. 243. Vol. 1. Coll. Ret.*) where Dr. *Leygh-ton's* Subscription is set down, there is set by it *T. Cantuarien.* Now if Mr. *Lowth* be in the wrong, he is guilty of extreme *Carelessness* indeed: but if you be in the wrong, you are guilty, Sir, of a double *Falshood*, of one in your *History*, of another in your *Letter*.

Now, Sir, (as you say) I would willingly believe the best of every man (and even of you Dr. *Burnet*) but since you have charged Mr. *Lowth* so severely for *Uncharitableness* and *Injustice*, and for *slandering* you *falsly*, I must crave leave to tell you (for it is a hard thing, and needs a Preface to soften it) that you, your self, Dr. *Burnet*, are the *False* man, and the *Slanderer* (for all your *Confidence*) that have brought *Shame* upon your self, if you have not *forgotten* to blush, since (as some Folk says) you hardened your *Conscience* in the case of my Lord *Lauderdale*, and your *Forehead* at the *Rolls*. Be not angry, Sir, but turn to your own Book. Turn to *page 227.* where the *Question* of *Church-Power* is, where *Leygh-ton's* Opinion is, and where *Cranmer's* Subscription ought to be, and you cannot find any *Notice* of that Subscription there (tho it be there in the *Manuscript*, saith Dr. *Durel*, whom you say we may *Believe*.) Turn on further to *page 230.* where another question upon the same subject is, and where *Leigh-ton's* Opinion is again, and where

where *Cranmer's* Subscription ought to be too (if we believe *Dr. Durel*, as you grant we may) and neither there is any the least notice taken of any such Subscription.

Indeed such a Subscription is noted by you page 243. (the place you refer us to in your Letter) there is *T. Cantuarien.* over against the name of *Edward Leighton*; - but that (good Doctor) is upon another Article, upon the Point of *Extreme Unction*, and upon that Point only, not upon the Point of *Church-Power* (the Point in Controversie between *Mr. Lowth* and you.) And what is that Subscription to the purpose? He speaks of one thing; you of another that belongs not to the Question. He accuseth you for *False dealing* in the case of *Church-Power*; you would come off by shewing your *just dealing* in the case of *Unction*. This is a Trick, an Evasion, and instead of being a Defence, is an argument of *Guilt*, a confession of a crime which none but *Dr. Burnet* could have been guilty of. *Mr. Lowth* chargeth you upon one Point (that of *Church-Power*, I tell ye) and he chargeth you roundly, justly, clearly, like an *Honest man*, like an *English-man*, like a true-hearted *Clergy-man*; you answer him *Impertinently* upon a Point that neither of you is concerned about. You conceal *Cranmer's* Subscription, where you should have mention'd it (saith *Mr. Lowth*;) You tell him you have mention'd it:

it: but 'tis in *another* case that signifies nothing. What shall we call this? Fraud? Falseness? Equivocation? Shifting? Impudence? and an *Abuse* upon *Lowth* and *Cranmer* too? I call it *neither*; but some in *England* call it a *Burnetisme*, meaning a complication of *all* this. Who but Dr. *Burnet* would tell Mr. *Lowth* now, that he hath taken his Collection *verbatim* from the Original, when there is not a word of the Arch-Bishops Subscription in the *Transcript*, where it is in the *Manuscript*? Who but Dr. *Burnet* would have the Confidence to accuse Mr. *Lowth* of Uncharitableness in the manner, and of Injustice as to the matter of his charge? Who but Dr. *Burnet* would presume to take occasion hence to upbraid Mr. *Lowth* for the roughness of his *Stile* (which proceeds most from the fault of his *Printer*, and for want of good *Correction*, the Honest man himself being at a great distance from *London*?) Really Doctor, I am concerned for your *Reputation*, tho I hope it will not prejudice the credit of your *History*. If it shakes *that*, I think both Houses of the next Parliament will be concern'd to take you to task for it, and for *Imposing* thus upon all Englishmen, as if you took us all for Children and Fools, *easy* to be cheated. If it *should* hinder the sale of your Book, the Price of it will *fall*, and the Injury is to *Us* that bought it before, when the rate was *high*. But if it should turn to *your* injury, or the *Booksellers*,
you

(7)

you know Chancery gives not Equity for an Unsaleable Book ; and of all men living I know none that has less reason to expect Relief, than your self, especially since the Master of the Rolls is dead. I only advise you to own your fault fairly and ingenuously, or else to take some other course to clear your self, lest the world say, that you have plaid the Knaves in your Book, and the Fool in your Defence. And so farewell, till you pester the Press again.

Yours, &c.

I crave your pardon that I send you this by the Penny-Post ; your old Friends , Ferguson , Bethel , Billing, and I know not how many more that were wont to meet you at Starkey's by Temple-Bar , are now out of the way, and I know none other of your Intimates to send you a Letter by.

F I N I S.

L O N D O N :

Printed for Randal Taylor near Stationers-Hall, 1685.